

**I. CLAIM:**

1. An above-ground swimming pool comprising:
  - structural paneling defining a pool perimeter;
  - a plurality of structural vertical posts regularly spaced apart along the pool perimeter and retaining the structural paneling;
  - a structural ledge supported by the structural vertical posts and retaining the structural paneling at a top end thereof along the pool perimeter; and
  - a plurality of decorative panels installed so as to substantially hide the structural paneling from view.
2. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, further comprising a base member retaining the structural paneling at a bottom end thereof along the pool perimeter.
3. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 2, wherein the base member also retains the decorative panels at a bottom end thereof along the pool perimeter.
4. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein the structural ledge retains the decorative panels at a top end thereof along the pool perimeter.
5. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein a single decorative panel extends between and is retained by adjacent structural vertical posts.
6. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of decorative panels connected to one another extend between and are retained by adjacent structural vertical posts.
7. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of decorative panels are connected to one another side by side.
8. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of decorative panels are connected to one another one on top of the other.
9. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein each structural vertical post is hidden from view by a decorative vertical post.
10. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 9, wherein a single decorative panel extends between and is retained by adjacent decorative vertical posts.

11. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 9, wherein a plurality of decorative panels connected to one another extend between and are retained by adjacent decorative vertical posts.
12. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein the structural ledge is hidden from view by a decorative ledge.
13. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 12, wherein the decorative ledge retains the decorative panels at a top end thereof along the pool perimeter.
14. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein each of the decorative panels is shaped so as to mimic a series of horizontal wood boards.
15. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein each of the decorative panels is shaped so as to mimic a series of vertical wood boards.
16. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein each of the decorative panels is shaped so as to mimic a single wood board.
17. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein the pool perimeter is round, and the decorative panels are at least in partial contact with the structural paneling so as to define a second round perimeter in close relationship with the pool perimeter.
18. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein the pool perimeter is polygonal, and the decorative panels are at least in partial contact with the structural paneling so as to define a second polygonal pool perimeter in close relationship with the pool perimeter.
19. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein the decorative panels are installed so as to obtain a second perimeter having a different shape than the pool perimeter.
20. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein the decorative panels are made from extruded plastic.
21. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 1, wherein the decorative panels are made from thermoformed plastic.

22. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 9, wherein each decorative vertical post is shaped so as to mimic at least one wood board.
23. The above-ground swimming pool according to claim 12, wherein the decorative ledge is shaped so as to mimic a plurality of wood boards.
24. A decorating kit for an existing above-ground swimming pool, the swimming pool including structural paneling, a plurality of structural vertical posts and a top structural ledge, the kit comprising:
- a plurality of decorative vertical posts designed to be attached over the structural vertical posts so as to substantially hide the structural vertical posts from view;
  - a plurality of decorative panels designed to be retained by adjacent decorative vertical posts so as to substantially hide the structural paneling from view; and
  - a decorative ledge designed to be attached to the decorative vertical posts so as to substantially hide the top structural ledge from view.
25. The kit according to claim 24, wherein the decorative ledge retains the decorative panels at a top end thereof.
26. The kit according to claim 24, wherein each decorative panel is composed of a plurality of smaller panels connected to one another.
27. The kit according to claim 26, wherein each of the smaller panels is shaped so as to mimic a single wood board.
28. The kit according to claim 26, wherein the plurality of smaller panels are connected to one another side by side.
29. The kit according to claim 26, wherein the plurality of smaller panels are connected to one another one on top of the other.
30. The kit according to claim 24, wherein each of the decorative panels is shaped so as to mimic a series of horizontal wood boards.
31. The kit according to claim 24, wherein each of the decorative panels is shaped so as to mimic a series of vertical wood boards.

32. The kit according to claim 24, wherein the structural paneling defines a pool perimeter, and the decorative panels are at least in partial contact with the structural paneling so as to define a second pool perimeter in close relationship to the pool perimeter.
33. The kit according to claim 24, wherein the structural paneling defines a pool perimeter, and the decorative panels are installed so as to obtain a second perimeter having a different shape than the pool perimeter.
34. The kit according to claim 24, wherein the decorative panels are made from extruded plastic.
35. The kit according to claim 24, wherein the decorative panels are made from thermoformed plastic.
36. The kit according to claim 24, wherein each decorative vertical post is shaped so as to mimic at least one wood board.
37. The kit according to claim 24, wherein the decorative ledge is shaped so as to mimic a plurality of wood boards.
38. A method for assembling an above-ground swimming pool comprising the steps of:  
installing a plurality of structural vertical posts in a regularly spaced-apart manner along a desired pool perimeter;  
installing structural paneling along the desired pool perimeter so that the structural paneling is retained by the vertical posts;  
installing a structural ledge defining the desired pool perimeter on top of the vertical posts, the structural ledge retaining the structural paneling along a top end thereof; and  
installing a plurality of decorative panels over the structural paneling so that the structural paneling is substantially hidden from view.
39. The method according to claim 38, wherein the plurality of decorative panels are installed so as to be retained by the structural vertical posts.
40. The method according to claim 38, wherein the installation of the decorative panels includes for at least one of the plurality of decorative panels a step of installing a first decorative vertical post over a first of the plurality of structural vertical posts, connecting an

edge of the decorative panel to the first decorative vertical post, connecting an opposed edge of the decorative panel to a second decorative vertical post, and installing the second decorative vertical post over a second of the plurality of structural vertical post.

41. The method according to claim 38, further comprising a step of installing a decorative ledge over the structural ledge so as to hide the structural ledge from view.

42. The method according to claim 41, wherein the decorative ledge is installed so as to retain the decorative panels along a top end thereof.

43. The method according to claim 38, wherein a step of installing a base member along the pool perimeter is performed, and the structural paneling is installed so as to be retained also by the base member.

44. The method according to claim 43, wherein the decorative panels are installed so as to be retained by the base member.

45. An above-ground swimming pool comprising a skeleton structure adapted to hold a body of water, and a decorative panel assembly applied to the pool outwardly of the skeleton structure.